

1           1.       (Currently Amended) A locking mechanism for use in combination with  
2 and for preventing unintended disconnection of a generally horizontal beam from a  
3 vertical support post, said ~~locking mechanism comprising: post having~~ an array of  
4 vertically elongated first openings in said post; and said horizontal beam having an  
5 end flange on said beam, said end flange being arranged to overlap said first  
6 openings; said flange having a front face and a back face, with lugs projecting from a the  
7 front face of said flange into said first openings, said beam and said flange being  
8 vertically shiftable between a raised position at which said lugs are freely moveable into  
9 and out of upper portions of said first openings, and a lowered position at which said lugs  
10 are interlocked with said post in lower portions of said first openings; said locking  
11 mechanism comprising:

12               a resilient plate;

13               connecting means ~~on opposite sides of a mid-portion of said plate~~ for securing  
14 said plate to a the back face of said flange, said connecting means comprising tabs on  
15 said plate, said tabs being received in and deformed into interlocked engagement within  
16 slots in said flange; and

17               a pin projecting from the a mid-portion of said plate through a second opening in  
18 said flange above one of said lugs and beyond a the front face of said flange, said plate  
19 being resiliently deflectable to accommodate retraction of said pin into said second  
20 opening when said lugs are aligned with the upper portions of said first openings, and to  
21 urge said pin into the upper portion of one of said first openings when said lugs are  
22 shifted to the lower portions of said first openings.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The locking mechanism of claim 2 wherein said tabs are movable within said slots to accommodate deflection of said plate relative to said flange.

4. (Currently Amended) The locking mechanism, in accordance with claims 1 or 3 ~~any one of claims 1-3~~ wherein said plate is provided with at least one peripheral deformation configured to coact with ~~the back face of~~ said flange in defining a pocket for receiving a tool used to resiliently deflect the plate in order to withdraw said pin ~~into~~ from said ~~access~~ second opening.

5. (Previously Presented) The locking mechanism in accordance with claim 4 wherein said at least one peripheral deformation is aligned laterally with said pin.